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**Planning and Managing for Results with Teams,
Customers, and Partners in the Reengineered USAID:
*Observations From The Field***

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PLANNING AND MANAGING FOR RESULTS WITH TEAMS, CUSTOMERS, AND PARTNERS IN THE REENGINEERED USAID: OBSERVATIONS FROM THE FIELD

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On October 1, 1995, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) began agency-wide implementation of "Reengineering," a comprehensive set of reforms of the Agency's development processes and management systems. Guided by five core values-customer focus, managing for results, empowerment and accountability, teamwork and participation, and valuing diversity--the Agency is significantly changing how its overseas missions and other operating units develop their programs' strategic plans, achieve the results called for in those plans, and monitor and evaluate program performance. This paper shares eight months later¹ some of what technical assistance teams saw and heard in working with USAID missions applying Reengineering approaches to planning and performance measurement. It is part of the continuing efforts of the Program and Policy Coordination Bureau and the Management Bureau to share Reengineering experience.

The Performance Measurement and Evaluation Division of USAID's Center for Development Information and Evaluation (CDIE/PME) has, through its own staff and technical assistance teams, provided help and, in some cases, training in strategic management to 29 USAID missions in all four geographic regions since October 1, 1995.² This experience gave CDIE and its contractor under the PRISM project, Management Systems International, a unique opportunity to observe early field implementation of Reengineering approaches. Early in this process, CDIE decided that it was important to try to capture and share this experience for several reasons. First, severe resource constraints meant that few USAID/Washington direct-hire staff would have an opportunity to work directly with their colleagues in the field on developing, testing and applying newly reengineered approaches. Secondly, there was a great hunger both in USAID/W and field missions to learn about how and what others were doing in Reengineering. CDIE and one of its partners, the Management Bureau's Training Division (M/HRD/TD) asked that all teams or individuals providing technical assistance or training to field missions look systematically at the experience and report back on what they saw and heard. They were asked to report on the process, the tools and guidance that were most useful, innovative field practices, and challenges or "next generation" issues in Reengineering. Missions themselves reported directly on the technical assistance or training and further needs they saw

¹Missions that have served as County Experimental Laboratories (CELs) have more experience with selected reforms under Reengineering. Country Experimental Labs: One Year Later (PNABY270), summarizes CEL reporting. This is part of a series on Best Practices in Reengineering jointly-sponsored by PPC/CDIE and M/ROR and available by email from the CDIE Connection.

²The 29 missions included Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Mali, Mozambique, Namibia and REDSO/ESA in the AFR Region; Jordan and Morocco in the ANE Region; Albania, Armenia, Bulgaria, Caucasus, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Lithuania, Macedonia, Moldova, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, Ukraine, and the Regional Mission for Central Asia in Almaty, Kazakhstan, in the ENI Region; and Haiti, El Salvador, Jamaica, Nicaragua, and Paraguay in the LAC Region. Three of the missions, Namibia, Jamaica and Paraguay, did not receive visits from a PRISM team. The technical assistance was provided by Harriett Destler of PPC/CDIE/PME.

for help in Reengineering through a standardized questionnaire. These experiences were initially shared through cross-bureau debriefings and trip reports.

When it became apparent that missions faced common issues across regions and that many had developed exciting and innovative approaches to implementing Reengineering core values, PPC/CDIE and M/HRD/TD asked PRISM staff to summarize this experience for an Agency-wide seminar. This background paper for the seminar builds upon trip reports, mission documents, and focused interviews with members from all the technical assistance teams that visited missions between October 1, 1995, and mid-May, 1996.

The paper focuses on missions' experience in two key areas of Reengineering implementation, working in teams and working with customers and partners. The technical assistance teams observed many challenges in these two areas as they provided assistance with strategic planning and performance measurement. Working with teams raised questions about how to fit strategic objective teams into mission organizational structures, how to empower teams and hold them accountable from without and from within, and how to build and manage effective teams. Working with customers and partners raised questions about when and how to include customers and partners in the strategic management process, what benefits accrued from greater participation, and how to maximize benefits without incurring excessive costs.

The findings in this paper are more descriptive than prescriptive, more illustrative than comprehensive, and more thought-provoking than conclusive. This relates both to the nature of the sample and the context within which the assistance was provided. First, most USAID missions vary in terms of budget and staff, which makes generalization difficult. A small ENI mission may encounter very different issues related to teamwork than might a large, well-established AFR, ANE, or LAC mission. Similarly, innovations being pioneered by a large mission to maximize customer and partner participation during strategic planning may be wholly unworkable for a small mission, or one that is going through rapid down-sizing or close out.

Second, the observations presented here were obtained in the context of providing technical assistance to missions that wanted help with developing results frameworks and indicators in preparation of program strategies and Results Review and Resource Requirement documents (R4s) for submission. Some of these missions were among the first to attempt to develop strategies and results frameworks under Re-engineering. In a number of cases, fast-approaching deadlines affected team dynamics and the amount and manner of engaging partners and customers. Therefore, the sample of missions deals only with management challenges that relate to a rather narrow part of the entire strategic planning process. As missions implement their strategic plans through results packages and monitor performance against specific results, different and, perhaps, even more difficult challenges related to working on teams and with customers and partners may surface.

Finally, it should be noted that one-third of the missions in this review were in the ENI region. These new missions had their own unique challenges, which affected their adoption of Reengineering reforms and Agency core values.

The review yielded nine key findings:

- **For the most part, USAID missions were making a significant and serious attempt to make teamwork and customer-and partner-participation their usual way of doing business in managing their programs.** They were doing this despite shrinking budgets, increasing program uncertainty, extended furloughs and impending reductions in force.
- **In those cases in which missions had chosen to maintain both strategic objective teams and technical offices, most were experiencing some confusion over the roles of each. Where missions had eliminated technical offices, many were learning that strategic objective teams could not (or should not) perform all the functions that technical offices performed.** Promising practices included clear delineations of responsibility from mission management, explicit mission orders, and the creation of special administrative units.
- **Empowerment of strategic objective teams was very difficult, if not impossible, without senior mission management's support and good faith delegation of decision-making authority.** The challenge for successful empowerment *within* strategic objective teams lay in being able to abandon old hierarchical authority patterns and find team-oriented team leaders. Promising practices included strategic objective team contracts between teams and mission management, the careful selection of team leaders by team members, and joint team leadership.
- **Considerable uncertainty existed among team members about their teams' functions, how their teams were expected to work, how large teams should be, and whether teamwork was worthwhile at all.** Promising practices included using local consultants skilled in teamwork, establishing explicit norms for team behavior, breaking large teams up into smaller, more manageable sub-teams, and relying on partners when the mission did not have enough staff to serve on teams.
- **Many strategic objective teams feared that they were being held accountable for the achievement of strategic objectives that were more ambitious than they considered reasonable and for which they had insufficient control.** Framing of objectives with partners also led to broader or more elaborate objectives, which, in some cases, represented vision statements.
- **Ensuring productive linkages among teams that relied on common results or whose programs reinforced one another was a challenge in many missions.** Promising practices

included mission-wide strategic-objective-oriented meetings and mission-wide “executive councils” to coordinate efforts.

- **Most missions were reluctant to involve customers directly in strategic planning and on strategic objective teams.** Promising practices included using in-house rapid appraisal techniques and contracted surveys to obtain customer input.
- **Many missions struggled to identify appropriate levels and timing of participation among their partners in strategic planning and implementation.** Many chose to delay partner participation until the development of performance indicators out of fear of being unduly pressured by contractors and donors who might promote specific positions out of self-interest. An important exception was Paraguay, which saw planning with partners as the most viable way for a small mission to develop a strategic plan. Other promising practices included varying the kinds of partner involvement depending on the particular stage of the planning process and using seminars as “expanded teams” to obtain feedback on results framework.
- **Some missions had difficulty determining which partners to include in SO team activities, while others had trouble getting certain crucial partners to participate on a consistent basis.** Promising practices included using a broad-based group of partners to elicit feedback on a draft results framework (developed by the within-mission core team) and breaking up a large expanded team of partners into more manageable sub-teams with narrower focuses and tasks.

These findings suggest several ways in which USAID/Washington and the Agency senior managers can help the missions meet the challenges of working in teams and working with customers and partners:

- **AID/W and the Agency’s senior managers can communicate clearly their expectations with regard to teamwork and customer and partner participation.** For example, what forms of teamwork would help missions move beyond planning to achieving results? How should virtual teamwork function? How can these expectations be met, in the context of limited travel and Operating Expense (OE) funds?
- **AID/W can provide badly needed clarification on some points of tradeoff or conflict among key changes occurring as a result of reengineering.** For example, can the debate between program and procurement staff over the opportunities and limits of engaging potential contractors and grantees as partners in the strategic planning process be resolved? What clarification or guidance can senior managers give missions regarding accountability for SOs, to help resolve the authority, personnel, and accountability issues that have arisen from reengineering’s having overlaid an SO team structure on the traditional mission structure of technical and program offices? What is being done (or planned) to adjust organizational and personnel reward structures to reinforce teamwork and participation?

- **Missions need tangible support from Washington for the reengineering effort.** In addition to a continuing need for technical assistance and training in results management and performance measurement, missions need assistance in developing teamwork and participation skills of mission staff and partners. Missions need OE for in-country travel and other financial resources to work consistently with their customers and partners. They need senior managers to make it a priority to disseminate successful practices and solutions to common problems.
- **Missions need tangible evidence of AID/Washington's commitment to reengineering itself.** For example, are key AID/W offices reengineering their own administrative processes, consulting with missions as their customers and partners, collaborating with other AID/W offices as teammates, and working with missions as virtual team members? Beyond verbal commitments, there need to be visible signs of change in AID/W.
- **Missions need to see that the Agency's senior managers are not only trying to improve reengineering's new processes and policies, but are also protecting the principles of flexibility and empowerment from what appear to be growing layers of guidance and requirements from AID/W.** For example, is USAID periodically reviewing the new directives for clarity, fairness, feasibility of implementation, and, above all, contribution to the results being sought under reengineering? In short, missions need to be assured that reengineering is a process of continuous improvement, where shortcomings in policy and directives are acknowledged and corrected.

I. WORKING WITH TEAMS

By establishing teamwork and participation as a Reengineering core value, USAID recognizes the potential benefits of a team-based management approach. Since October 1995, there has been increased support for teamwork and broader participation both within the Agency and with its partners and customers. However, almost all of the missions observed during PRISM and PME technical assistance trips have encountered obstacles in putting teamwork into practice. Issues related to team authority and responsibility, team structure, membership and internal management, and overall team coordination presented substantial management challenges to missions and strategic objective (SO) teams. These challenges, as well as some promising approaches to address them, are summarized below.

Management Challenge #1: Reconciling Strategic Objective Team Roles with Technical Office Responsibilities

Missions have taken different approaches to defining the operational parameters of SO teams vis-a-vis technical offices. These efforts range from replacing technical offices with SO teams to establishing SO teams that are, to a very large degree, synonymous with the technical offices alongside which they exist. The most fundamental management challenge has been to eliminate or substantially reduce the confusion regarding the authorities and responsibilities that reside with SO teams versus those that reside with technical offices. The following observations, which represent the experience of many missions, provide some insights into this challenge.

- A number of missions noted confusion about the lines of authority and responsibility between SO teams and technical offices. In some missions this resulted in SO team reluctance to move forward in defining team functions and, more generally, with efforts to build effective teams. In others, the team process moved forward without first resolving existing ambiguities. In these cases, there arose significant management issues and disagreements, which were caused by differing expectations and assumptions among mission staff.
- Some smaller missions appear to have less difficulty reconciling the team structure with the technical office structure because, as one mission put it, technical divisions are relatively small and there is not as strong a system of competition between technical offices in small missions. Staff have to work together and have more of a sense of being on the same, mission-wide, team.
- Operating units that replaced technical offices with SO teams faced the issue of how to complete tasks previously handled by technical offices when these tasks seemed inappropriate to or inconsistent with SO teams.
- Not only have field missions of the ENI Bureau had to reconcile the lines of authority and responsibility between SO teams and mission technical offices, but they have also had to

consider the relationship between SO teams and the ENI/W technical offices. In the ENI Bureau, management and technical responsibility is shared between Washington and the field, and lines of authority between the two are often ambiguous. Even more complex is the situation in the USAID Regional Missions. In addition to having shared authority between Washington and the local mission office, each regional mission has country representatives operating out of one or more other capitals.

Promising Approaches

- 1) USAID/South Africa: the Mission has issued mission orders that dissolve technical offices and explicitly establish SO teams as the principal management units in charge of operations. The Mission has also developed teams of administrative assistants to support and complete administrative functions and tasks that were previously handled by the technical offices but which are not currently under the purview of the SO teams. The decision to dissolve technical offices was precipitated by confusion and potential conflict between SO teams and technical offices when both organizational units existed at the Mission. Other missions that have dissolved technical offices include USAID/Jamaica and USAID/Mali.
- 2) USAID/Russia: while maintaining both technical offices and SO teams, Mission management has preliminarily defined clear lines of responsibility and authority between SO teams and technical offices. Strategic objective teams are responsible for strategic planning and performance monitoring, while technical offices are responsible for implementing activities which support the achievement of the mission's strategic objectives. In both areas, however, i.e., in important planning and implementation matters, final decisions rest with the former technical office heads.
- 3) USAID/Morocco: as in USAID/Russia, technical offices and SO teams coexist. In Morocco, mission management has issued mission orders that address areas of potential ambiguity between SO teams and technical offices.

Discussion

Being clear about the respective authorities and responsibilities of SO teams and technical offices is the most apparent remedy to this management challenge. A first step may be to issue mission orders or similar procedural guidance. However, mission orders do not necessarily mean an end to confusion and ambiguity. Field observations indicate that senior mission management must act decisively, consistently and in accordance with any guidance issued if staff are to feel confident about their new roles. This is necessary if they are to move ahead with their work, whether it be for technical offices or SO teams.

Even those missions that have defined clear boundaries between SO teams and technical offices may need to establish formal mechanisms to resolve any disagreements or questions that arise. Finally, it is important to note that establishing clear lines of authority and responsibility between

teams and technical offices does not necessarily mean that the resulting organizational structure will be optimally efficient or effective. Institutionalized teams are new to USAID; missions will have to remain flexible as they search for the best balance between the “old” and “new” structures.

Management Challenge #2: Empowering Teams and Team Members

Many missions have found it difficult to put the concept of empowerment into practice. This is true not only when senior mission management empowers an SO team or team leader, but also when empowering team members within an individual SO team. These processes represent new approaches to management in USAID. Many missions have difficulty both in identifying the range and level of authorities to be delegated, and in ensuring that empowerment actually occurs. A portion of the empowerment question is answered by defining clear lines of authority between SO teams and technical offices (see the preceding discussion). However, as the following summary observations make clear, that is only one element of this complex management challenge.

- Experience in many missions suggests that successful empowerment of SO teams depends in large measure on the extent to which senior management supports empowerment and other changes intended under Reengineering. There are notable successes in this regard, but in a number of missions, the process of empowering SO teams by senior mission management has lacked consistency and clarity. SO team members frequently expressed confusion regarding team authorities. Even in those cases in which SO teams felt empowered to a substantial degree, it was not uncommon for senior managers to override the decisions of SO teams. This included both management decisions, such as who would be team leader, and programmatic decisions. A number of SO teams felt that they were empowered to discuss issues and develop ideas, but not to make decisions.
- A number of SO team members cited empowerment within their teams as a more problematic issue than the empowerment of the overall teams (or team leaders) by senior management. Two common and related observations are (1) SO teams frequently maintained a hierarchical operating environment consistent with the most closely related technical office; even when technical office chiefs were not team leaders, team members almost always deferred to their opinions; and (2) in almost all cases, empowerment, or perceived empowerment, was closely associated with the personality and management style of the team leader. In teams that experienced a general feeling of disempowerment, there was a predictably pronounced level of skepticism as to whether USAID could become a team-based organization.
- Missions in countries that are of geopolitical significance to the U.S. Government faced a particularly difficult challenge related to empowerment. For these missions, the process of empowerment begins and ends outside the organizational structure of the mission or Agency. Decisions by SO teams, supported by senior mission management, have been

frequently overridden by other USG departments or offices (most frequently the State Department or Embassy).

Promising Approaches

- 1) USAID/Russia: the Mission Director has actively discouraged, senior managers from overriding any decisions made by SO teams (though it is not yet clear what types and level of decisions SO teams will have the authority to make). Instead, senior mission management will constitute an “executive council” that will advise SO teams as they deliberate management and programmatic decisions. In addition, technical office chiefs are not permitted to be SO team leaders and are to serve principally as advisors when necessary and as called upon. Presently, however, it appears that the final say on important planning and implementation decisions still rests with the technical office chiefs. These positions and decisions reflect only very initial thinking on this issue by the Mission.
- 2) USAID/South Africa: the Mission has issued mission orders that define the authorities of SO teams (and, more specifically, team leaders). The mission orders not only establish clear guidelines for empowering SO teams, they also encourage substantial empowerment within teams. (The mission orders do not, however, mandate within-team empowerment.)
- 3) USAID/Jamaica: each SO team has been asked to develop a “Strategic Objective Pact.” These pacts provide comprehensive information regarding the substance and strategic foundation of the SO. In addition, they delineate the authorities of the Mission Director, clarify the parameters of empowerment for each of the Mission’s SO teams, and describe the responsibilities of the respective SO team leader, Results Package managers, and the SO team as a whole. In effect, Strategic Objective Pacts are management contracts between the SO teams and the Mission Director. (Other LAC Bureau missions, including USAID/Honduras and USAID/Dominican Republic, are using this management tool as well.)
- 4) USAID/Kenya: to facilitate active participation and empowerment, one SO planning team established joint team leadership. One team leader was the office chief of the most relevant technical office. The other was a widely and well-respected foreign service national (FSN). Although initially many FSNs on the team brought their concerns to the FSN leader outside the larger group, the leader was able to incorporate those concerns into the decision-making process of the SO team. Over time, FSN team members became comfortable with openly engaging in SO team discussions and decisions.
- 5) USAID/Dominican Republic: prior to selecting team leaders, SO teams worked as a group to identify the characteristics and behaviors they would desire in a team leader. These characteristics were then developed into a loose code of conduct. Finally, prospective team leaders were selected by the teams and asked about their comfort with the codes the teams had developed. This approach resulted in shared expectations among and between all team

members, including the team leaders, and led to greater empowerment and participation throughout the teams.

Discussion

It is apparent that missions and teams have not generally interpreted the lack of strict guidelines as a vehicle for empowerment. In the majority of cases, the absence of clarity about the specific responsibilities and authorities of teams has led to more conservative actions by teams, rather than more creative or empowered actions. This suggests that marked benefits would result from clear and unambiguous guidelines aimed at empowering SO teams and team members.

Guidelines alone, however, will not result in optimally productive empowerment arrangements. In most observed missions, it was clear that the deeds of senior managers were far more significant to the eventual structure and clarity of team empowerment than were declarations or written guidelines. Senior managers and SO teams will need to experiment to find what works best. It is reasonable to anticipate a medium-term learning period for this process.

Interestingly, it appears that less effort has been made to facilitate empowerment within SO teams than to develop approaches to empower the team as a whole, i.e., delegating authorities from senior mission management to SO teams. Some mission orders or procedural guidelines touch on the issue of within-team empowerment, but not in great depth or detail. Mission orders or similar official guidelines, while useful, are not sufficient in themselves for ensuring empowerment within teams. This may suggest a need to explore other means to address within-team empowerment. It also highlights the importance of selecting and developing “good” team leaders.

Finally, as the traditional alignment of authorities shifts, the roles of various mission staff change in significant ways. For example, as senior managers grapple with the process of empowering teams, they must also redefine their own roles within their missions. Similarly, as authorities are delegated “farther down” an operating unit’s structure - to SO and RP teams - FSNs are both presented with tremendous opportunities and thrust into unfamiliar roles.

Management Challenge #3: Building Effective Teams that Bring Value to Both the Mission and its Customers

In addition to the organizational questions covered in the preceding management challenges, there are a number of issues that must be addressed if teams are to operate effectively. These include, determining who participates on a team and developing an appropriate approach for recruiting team members, defining team objectives and tasks, and assigning roles and responsibilities within the team.

- The means for identifying internal team members varied substantially across missions. In some missions, SO team members were self-selected. In others, senior managers assigned individuals to teams. The majority of missions fell somewhere in between. As might be expected, different approaches to choosing team members resulted in different types of SO teams. The depth and range of experience and skills varied substantially from team to team, as did the burden that team membership implied for certain team members. It was not clear that any particular team selection process resulted in more optimal teams. In many cases, the nature of team membership appeared to be significantly influenced by the size of the mission.
- In many cases, missions and teams appeared to give little consideration to recruiting and involving virtual team members. Frequently, when AID/W was involved, it was to provide a specific piece of information or to help on a discrete task. In most cases, AID/W personnel were not brought fully into the process as central team members. One important exception to this was USAID/Paraguay.³
- Strategic objective team members often felt unsure about the overall objectives and functions of their teams. Many teams understood that they needed to work together to produce a results framework and an R4 submission. Beyond these products, they were far less certain about their team functions. SO teams in turn found it very difficult to define and assign roles and responsibilities among team members. This appears to be a particular problem with regard to virtual team members.
- Within and across SO teams, team members often had significantly different ideas about what a team is and how it should operate, e.g., how to reach decisions or consensus, or even if consensus within a team is necessary or important. The notions of teams and teamwork held by team members frequently differed and were often incomplete and arguably incorrect. Perhaps more importantly, the skills necessary for building and maintaining effective teams - communication skills, conflict resolution skills, etc. - were often in short supply on SO teams. This contributed to cases in which even teams with broad participation and a sense of empowerment struggled with making decisions and engaging in active management.
- A few team members questioned explicitly the value of a team-based approach to management. Some felt that team membership constituted too substantial a time burden. This was particularly true in small missions. Other team members felt team approaches were of little value because they believed all critical decisions would continue to be made

This point deals exclusively with internal, i.e., USAID, team members. For a discussion of partner and customer team membership, refer to Management Challenge #3 in Section II, "Working with Customers and Partners."

outside of the SO team, either by senior mission management or by AID/W. (Refer to the earlier discussion of empowerment issues.)

- The size of a SO team had a large impact on the team's effectiveness. Teams that were either too large or too small had difficulty operating as a team and bringing the benefits of teamwork to the planning and management process. Teams that were too large (more than fifteen) had trouble making decisions or establishing consensus while actively involving all team members. Teams that were too small (four or fewer people) did not have an adequate range of skills, knowledge, experience and perspective to draw on when developing results frameworks and performance monitoring systems.
- Many SO teams had members with a broad range of skills and experience. Some members had little or no background in the technical subject area of the given SO. Fully incorporating all members, regardless of background, in the business of the team was difficult for a number of SO teams.

Promising Approaches

- 1) USAID/Jamaica: the Mission brought in a Jamaican consultant and an Embassy staff member to conduct a series of team-building workshops. The focus of the workshops was to improve conflict resolution and communication skills.
- 2) USAID/Jordan: the Mission identified a local consultant to help team members acquire team-relevant skills and, more broadly, to help increase the strength and effectiveness of the Mission's teams. By identifying a consultant/team coach from Jordan, the Mission has positioned itself to get help with teams and teamwork as frequently as is necessary.
- 3) USAID/Mali, USAID/Haiti, USAID/Dominican Republic, USAID/Poland, REDSO/ESA, and USAID Regional Mission for Central Asia: each of these missions brought in external team-building experts or trainers to increase the effectiveness of their SO teams. In each instance, the team building was conducted within the context of the real work of the teams.
- 4) USAID/Kenya: one of the Mission's SO planning teams was quite large. This SO team found its meetings to be inefficient, disorderly and unproductive. To address the situation, one of the team co-leaders developed meeting procedures which the entire team reviewed and agreed to observe. These procedures, including vote-based decision-making and observing only one speaker at a time, resulted in more productive SO team meetings. (Proper facilitation of the meetings is required if each member is to actively participate.)

In an effort to address the difficulties presented by a large team, another SO team at USAID/Kenya established a smaller internal "rump team." The rump team developed drafts of team products (e.g., results frameworks) and then invited the entire team to comment on,

discuss, and debate drafts presented. Using this mechanism, the team was able to move ahead without sacrificing broad team participation.

- 5) USAID/Nicaragua: the Mission also faced the prospect of very large SO teams. The Mission made a collective decision to establish intermediate results teams as the principal unit for engaging in strategic planning and management efforts. (IR teams for a specific SO coordinate around SO-level issues.) In moving to IR teams, the Mission has attempted to ensure that the benefits of teams and teamwork are realized by the Mission and its customers.

The Mission also recognized a need to rationalize the process of selecting members for its IR teams. With the assistance of external facilitators, the Mission developed a team membership matrix to review the composition of teams and the burden that multiple memberships placed on specific individuals. The Mission considered potential options for modifying team membership in order to increase team effectiveness.

- 6) USAID/Paraguay: this Mission has a small staff and could not by itself assemble SO teams of adequate size. To solve this problem, the Mission invited a broad range of partners into the business of the SO teams earlier and more completely than might otherwise have been expected. By involving partners, SO teams enjoyed a significantly expanded level of team expertise and experience. The result has been more dynamic, productive and effective SO teams than might be anticipated at a small mission.

Discussion

Team effectiveness requires team members with appropriate abilities and experience, clear team objectives and functions, identified roles and responsibilities for team members, team building skills, and effective team processes. One way to address these requirements is to identify local consultants who have the skills and experience to serve as long-term team coaches and facilitators. It is also useful to recognize that groups can truly function as teams only within certain size parameters. In the case of expanded SO teams - it may make sense not to expect "teams" to function as teams, *per se* (instead, perhaps, using them as broad reference groups). Finally, building effective teams is not an easy undertaking. Given the Agency's lack of experience with institutionalized teams, many of the challenges related to effective teamwork, even when actively addressed, will require ample time for resolution.

Management Challenge #4: Balancing Accountability with the Need to Address Significant Development Objectives

Mission staff and SO team members often expressed concern about accountability. They saw tension between establishing objectives, in concert with partners, that address significant development problems, and being held accountable for achieving such ambitious objectives. While this is not a new issue, it seems to have become more prominent as a result of objective setting within the team environment.

- A number of SO teams said that requiring teams to work with partners toward the achievement of a given strategic objective, without explicitly acknowledging the lack of control that USAID exercises over those partners, placed teams in a very tenuous position. That is, Reengineering attributes achievement of a strategic objective to multiple actors while holding only one actor accountable. Some teams were especially concerned about the potential for partners' non-performance when there is not in place any formal partnership or contracting agreement that lays out responsibilities, particularly for results that are needed in order for other results to be accomplished.
- A substantial number of SO teams were confused about the accountability standard to which they will be held - i.e., achieving strategic objectives versus managing to achieve strategic objectives. Some teams argued that Reengineering guidance is inconsistent on this question, in effect supporting both positions.
- SO team members also asked how team accountability relates to individual accountability. Within this context, several SO team members raised concerns about individual "non-performers."
- In a number of missions, senior managers and SO teams did not agree on the most appropriate level of ambition for strategic objectives. In many cases, senior managers wanted to "elevate" strategic objectives to a level with which SO teams, concerned about accountability, were uncomfortable.

Discussion

The implications of this management challenge are significant. If accountability is defined strictly along the lines of achieving strategic objectives, SO teams will be motivated to address modest development challenges and frame limited strategic objectives. If accountability is defined as managing to achieve results, SO teams will be encouraged to define more ambitious strategic objectives and employ more creative and risk-taking management approaches. It is useful to note that, although the R4 process provides means for explaining unique and unanticipated factors that have prevented the achievement of targets, it is not clear that SO teams have yet developed confidence in this intended safeguard.

The issue of team accountability is complicated enough with the changes and ambiguity regarding roles played by individuals *within* missions, but it becomes even more complicated when partners enter the picture. This is especially the case because the concept of collective responsibility among USAID and its partners for a given strategic objective is new to the Agency. There may be cases in which a mission is the key player in a given sector and thus should reasonably accept a large degree of responsibility for achieving the relevant strategic objective. There are other cases for which the opposite is true. In addition, partners (and customers or their representatives) as team members bring varied perspectives and opinions to the process of establishing a strategic objective. Finding a strategic objective on which all members of a team can agree can lead to an

SO that is framed in ambitious, “vision statement” terms. The more ambitious strategic objectives become, the more problematic is the question of accountability.

The foregoing indicates that difficulties with team and individual accountability are related to at least two factors: (1) lack of clarification and explicit acknowledgement of the *intra- and sub-team* results for which *individuals* are responsible and accountable, and (2) lack of clarification and acceptance of the implications of shared responsibility for strategic objective achievement by all parties, both within and outside the mission.

Management Challenge #5: Coordinating and Integrating the work of all Strategic Objective Teams within an Operating Unit

In many missions there are significant strategic and substantive overlaps among strategic objectives. The potential benefits from identifying and exploiting these overlaps are frequently not realized because coordination among SO teams is quite limited. Reengineering clearly encourages and anticipates that SO teams will work together to identify and manage causal linkages across strategic objectives. (It is intended that these linkages be reflected in results frameworks.) However, in many of the missions visited, this “grassroots” coordination between teams, whether it be through cross-SO team membership or some other vehicle, was not taking place. Taking advantage of these natural synergies without creating an increased burden to SO teams and their members is an emerging management challenge.

Promising Approaches

- 1) USAID/Ukraine: while developing its results frameworks, the Mission recognized the need to increase communication across the individual strategic objective teams. To do this, the mission held large, mission-wide meetings (called “town meetings” by the mission’s technical assistance consultant), at which SO teams presented their results frameworks. In this way, SO teams were able both to learn what other teams were doing and to identify areas of shared interest or importance. In addition, senior mission managers were also able to understand better the linkages among strategic objectives and catalyze the SO team coordination process.
- 2) USAID/Russia: senior mission managers have formed what amounts to an “executive council.” Strategic objective teams are required to present their SO statements, results frameworks and performance monitoring plans to the council. In consultation with the SO teams, the executive council not only reviews the appropriateness of the strategy, but also looks for synergies that could be realized by better SO team coordination. In addition, the council also considers how to best apportion the budget across strategic objectives.
- 3) USAID/South Africa: through mission orders, the Mission has established an Overarching Strategic Team (OST). Among its many functions, the OST is responsible for “addressing cross-cutting programmatic issues.” Although the practical specifics of its role have yet to be worked out, the OST is in an excellent position to ensure coordination across strategic

objectives and SO teams. OST membership includes senior mission managers, two representatives from each of the SO teams (at least one of whom is an FSN), as well as the Regional Contracting Officer, the Regional Legal Advisor, the Controller, and the Director of the Executive Office.

Discussion

Coordination across strategic objectives has the potential to contribute to increases in the performance and impact of individual strategic objectives. A substantial number of SO teams and operating units have yet to identify means to ensure coordination among SO teams. In those cases in which substantial coordination has taken place, one of three “models” seems to prevail: (1) a grassroots or natural coordination that stems from either cross-SO team membership or other informal mechanisms; (2) a formal, but only partially structured, coordination that takes place in large cross-SO team meetings; or (3) formal and structured coordination through a committee or group tasked with ensuring that coordination takes place. In missions where the first model is working well, there appears to be very little need for either the second or third. Similarly, if missions find either the first or second approach adequate, it is not clear that there is any value added by also pursuing the third.

II. WORKING WITH CUSTOMERS AND PARTNERS

USAID's reengineered approach to conducting business emphasizes involving customers and partners in all aspects of Agency operations - strategic planning, implementation and monitoring and evaluating performance.⁴ There are clear benefits of customer and partner involvement. These include more focused and appropriate programs, an improved ability to adapt activities to increase their contribution to program objectives, and an increased potential for sustainability. However, partner and customer participation does not come without a price, especially in terms of staff effort and management attention. In addition, it simply is not always easy to increase the consultative aspect of planning and implementing programs and activities. Involving customers and partners to the degree required by the Directives is new to USAID. The following management challenges reflect operating units' efforts to balance the benefits and the burden of the Agency's increased focus on customers and partners.

Management Challenge #1: Overcoming Substantial Obstacles to Involving Customers

In most of the missions observed, customer participation was very limited. Although in a few cases ultimate customers were consulted to provide input into the results framework development process, these customers never directly participated as strategic objective team members. In the rare instances in which a customer perspective was represented on an SO team, it was always through the participation of customer representatives (usually staff from NGOs that provide direct services to USAID's ultimate customers). Strategic objective teams cited a number of practical reasons for the lack of direct involvement of customers in the strategic planning process; for example, language and education barriers. Nonetheless, the benefits realized by those SO teams and missions that found some way to involve customers, albeit to a limited degree, point to the advantages of overcoming these obstacles to increased participation.

Promising Approaches

- 1) USAID/Ghana: prior to developing its results frameworks, the Mission formed a participation/customer service working group to develop guidance for strategic planning and

Under Reengineering, a "customer" is defined as "an individual or organization who receives USAID services or products, benefits from USAID programs, or who is affected by USAID actions." The customers of interest in this paper are USAID's "ultimate customers," that is, "host country people who are end users or beneficiaries of USAID assistance and whose participation is essential to achieving sustainable development results."

A "partner" is defined as "an organization or customer representative with which/whom USAID works cooperatively to achieve mutually agreed upon objectives and intermediate results, and to secure customer participation." Partners include private voluntary organizations (PVOs), indigenous and other international non-government organizations (NGOs), universities, other USG agencies, the U.N. and other multilateral organizations, professional and business associations, private businesses, and host country governments at all levels. We would add "bilateral donors to this list. (Definitions taken from the revised Agency directives, "Major Functional Series 200: Program Assistance," section 201.4.)

consultation with partners and customers. As a result of this guidance, the Mission contracted a local organization to train mission staff in rapid appraisal techniques. After the Mission first established the broad parameters of its programs in its focus sectors, health, education and agriculture, the trained staff traveled to various rural areas throughout Ghana to conduct rapid appraisal surveys. The Mission's strategic objective teams credit this exercise with providing them with a more complete understanding of their customer's perspectives and problems.⁵ This information, in turn, directly influenced the development of the Mission's results frameworks.

- 2) USAID/Jamaica: the customer focus Reengineering team at the Mission commissioned a Customer Needs Assessment Survey through a local consulting firm. The survey focused on USAID's service-delivery partners, as well as customers who receive USAID-funded services through the Mission's three strategic objectives. Existing and prospective customers were interviewed through questionnaires and focus groups about their satisfaction to date with USAID program activities and the effectiveness of service delivery linkages. They were also asked to identify their most critical needs with respect to improving their quality of life. The information gathered through the survey fed into the development of the results frameworks and will be used by SO teams when they work with their partners to design results packages.

Discussion

As the preceding examples illustrate, when customers are involved in some manner in the strategic planning process, the benefits are marked. In both of the promising approaches presented here, strategic objective teams were able to develop results frameworks more closely grounded in the reality of in-country conditions and the needs of intended customers. It is also reasonable to expect that customer input enhanced the chances for achieving the relevant strategic objectives. Although there are practical difficulties to including customers directly on strategic objective teams, it is feasible to develop vehicles that ensure customer perspectives inform the critical operational processes of missions.

Management Challenge #2: Deciding When and on Which Tasks to Involve Partners

Partner participation was evident in almost every mission observed, although the extent and nature of partner involvement varied considerably across missions and SO teams. However, SO teams were struggling to understand the costs and benefits of partner involvement. For many SO

⁵Similarly, missions in Bangladesh, El Salvador, Nepal, Egypt and Jordan report positively on the benefits of using rapid appraisal methods to survey customers and "ground truth" strategies. See Anne Sweetser's, *Contributions to Customer Focus in Reengineering and Relaxed and Participatory Appraisal Training in Nepal*.

teams, this meant identifying appropriate “entry points” for partner participation, namely, when and at which level partners should be involved.

- Many SO teams seemed uncomfortable with involving partners in the initial phases of results framework development. In most cases, SO team members wanted to be comfortable working together as a team, in new ways and toward new products, before bringing in their development partners. Several SO teams pointed out that they did not want either to increase the expectations of partners or to open the door for “partner lobbying” by involving them too early in the process. Usually, when partners did participate in the strategic planning process, it was to comment on already developed draft results frameworks.
- Several missions were reluctant to include implementing partners--i.e., contractors and grantees--on teams charged with planning strategic objectives because they were afraid that those partners’ ability to participate later in implementation would be jeopardized by potential conflicts of interest. In some cases, implementing partners were explicitly excluded or recused themselves from participation.
- Strategic objective teams frequently involved partners who were funded to implement USAID activities in identifying performance indicators. In every case, partner participation led to more direct, practical and technically sound indicators.

Promising Approaches

- 1) USAID/Lithuania: in an effort to bring its implementing partners substantially into the results framework development process, while maintaining a level of mission control that was comfortable to the staff, one SO team employed a three-stage process for interacting with its partners. First, prior to the initial drafting of the results framework, SO team members met with partners and discussed issues relevant to the development of an RF for the sector - i.e., what the main problems in the sector were, how they could be addressed, how much progress was reasonable to expect, which organizations were doing what, and so on. The core SO team then met and developed a draft results framework. Lastly, the SO team went back to its partners to get their thoughts and reactions to the draft results framework. In this manner, partner input was brought into the initial stages of the RF process, but the core SO team did not feel pressure from the partners when actually developing the initial results framework.
- 2) USAID/Kenya: the Mission recently developed a new strategic objective that combines elements of two former mission SOs. The core planning team for this new strategic objective included staff from two newly merged offices. The team decided to complete a draft RF that all team members could agree on before inviting their partners into the process. To develop a first draft, the SO team used recent nation-wide surveys of the agriculture and micro-enterprise sectors. Once a draft was complete, the SO team presented the results framework at a seminar to all its relevant partners. (This included the organizations that had participated

in conducting the agricultural assessment that fed into the development of the RF.) The seminar functioned as an expanded team exercise and resulted in refinement of the results framework. More importantly, it also led to agreements regarding greater coordination during strategy implementation.

- 3) USAID/Paraguay: diverging from the practice of the vast majority of operating units observed, the Mission (with only one U.S. direct hire) involved partners from the initial stages of strategy development. Serving as expanded team members, partners participated in a three-week strategic planning exercise organized by the Mission to develop its five-year Strategic Plan and Results Framework. The three-week exercise began with a week-long meeting that included all of USAID's key development partners and customer representatives. The assembled group of over 80 participants reviewed the country's development constraints, set priorities, and developed preliminary strategic objectives and results frameworks.

The week-long meeting with participants was followed by two more weeks of consultation, refinement of strategic objectives and results frameworks, and drafting of the strategy by a smaller core team of USAID staff and selected development partners. The subsequent strategy was shared with all of the participating development partners and intermediate customers in another plenary session at the conclusion of the three-week exercise. This process served to develop a strategy which drew upon the expert knowledge and varied perspectives of the Mission's partners. In addition, it created a cadre of informed and committed teams who could guide the subsequent implementation of the strategy.

- 4) USAID/Romania: this small mission also brought its development partners into the early stages of results framework development, but not because it is a very small mission. The mission felt it was the best way to get shared ownership and responsibility for its joint programs, cross-fertilization of ideas from various sectors, and the hands-on perspectives of implementing partners. This approach worked well, however, partly *because* the mission is small, and the joint mission-partner planning group was kept to a manageable size.

Discussion

Overall, missions and SO teams have found it easier to involve partners in their efforts to develop strategic plans, results frameworks and performance monitoring systems than customers. However, most SO teams appear to be uncertain about the extent and type of partner involvement that is most beneficial (to the team and, subsequently, to its ultimate customers). Many teams worried about conflict of interest issues.

Most of the SO teams observed were quick to recognize the advantages that partner participation brings to the process of developing indicators, a relatively technical activity. Teams were far less

sure about how or whether to involve their partners in the process of developing strategies and results frameworks. Interestingly, across the range of approaches used by SO teams to engage partners in strategy and RF development, there was very little indication that any approach had significant drawbacks (except for the possibility of unrealized benefits). Strategic objective teams that brought partners in early and involved them completely noted the many benefits of this approach. Similarly, SO teams that involved partners only as reviewers of already-developed results frameworks also pointed to the advantages of a more limited involvement by partners. This may simply indicate that each SO team is the best judge of how best to involve partners in its various activities. It may also indicate, however, that the reluctance of some SO teams to involve partners more completely in a full range of team activities is unfounded, at least in terms of the planning process.

Management Challenge #3: Determining Which Partners to Involve and Ensuring Their Active Participation

Many SO teams had difficulty determining which partners were the most appropriate to involve in various SO team activities and to help ensure the overall effectiveness of the SO team? The question of whom to involve is partially answered by understanding the functions and tasks with which partner participation will be most closely associated. Therefore, SO teams that had the best sense of partner roles were also the teams that had the clearest idea of which partners to involve.

Decisions regarding which partners to involve most completely in the work of the SO team appeared to involve much more than considerations of the specific tasks to which a partner might contribute. Teams weighed the overall potential advantages of involving specific partners, e.g., increased technical skills or sectoral and country experience and increased leverage in a given sector against the potential disadvantage of some partners for disrupting or challenging the work of the team. In some cases, teams were reluctant to involve potential partners fully, regardless of their importance in the given sector.

One additional observation pointing to the complexity of this management challenge is that several SO teams had difficulty securing the commitment and active participation of partners in their planning activities. This was very frustrating in some cases, because the participation of those partners was crucial to team progress.

- Many operating units and SO teams invited only a small subset of partners to work with the SO team. This subset usually consisted of an SO team's principal implementors, i.e., contractors and grantees. Although in most cases a number of important partners existed outside this group, they did not actively participate on the SO team. Contractors and grantees, however, often brought the perspectives and opinions of other partners to the work of the SO teams. (This situation was most prevalent in ENI missions, perhaps because most ENI missions are small and the Bureau is relatively inexperienced in strategic planning at the program level.)

- Some SO teams had difficulty involving partners who did not want to participate. While this was noted for only a small number of SO teams, it was a concern for a larger number of teams - teams that had not yet attempted to recruit all of their partners.
- In cases in which partners were interested in participating, SO teams occasionally experienced two other problems: (1) frequent turnover in the representatives being sent by partners to SO team meetings and (2) the inability of representatives to exercise decision-making authority on behalf of their organizations.
- In some cases, including the full set of relevant partners led to SO teams that were so large they could no longer function as true teams. This is an explicit illustration of the inherent conflict between involving partners (and customers) and having effective SO teams. (Refer to Management Challenge #3 in the *Working with Teams* section of this paper.)

Promising Approaches

- 1) USAID/Paraguay: the Mission involved all of its key development partners and customer representatives in the development of a five year strategic plan and results framework. Contrary to the experience of some other missions, all relevant partners were eager to participate and did so fully in a range of meetings. Participation was strengthened by the Mission's advance planning, translation and sharing of key documents, and careful design of plenary and smaller meetings. Many of the Mission's partners will be involved in subsequent planning and implementation activities. (USAID/Niger also increased its effectiveness in involving partners by translating results frameworks and strategic objective agreements into French and Hausa.)
- 2) USAID/Kenya: one SO team involved a broad set of partners on its expanded team during the development of its results framework. After completing a preliminary version of its results framework, the core team presented the RF to all of its relevant partners for comments and feedback. These partners included individuals from the Ministry of Agriculture, agricultural policy advisors from the private sector, professors and researchers from Egerton Agricultural University, and representatives from the donor community who had participated in the multi-donor agricultural assessment upon which much of the results framework was based. (The SO and RF reflect the link between agriculture and the private sector in Kenya).
- 3) USAID/Jordan: the Mission stressed the importance of involving a complete set of partners when conducting its work. During the process of developing its results framework, one SO team grew too large to function as a team. The team, directed by a facilitator, broke into "sub-teams," each with a specific set of tasks. Thus, the SO team was able to continue to involve productively all of its partners as it worked to develop its RF.

Discussion

The number and range of partners, as well as the level of their involvement, varied from mission to mission and from team to team. In some cases, conditions appeared to encourage the involvement of numerous partners. In others, this was clearly not the case. The variability in the level and scope of partner participation seems to relate to a number of factors, including, among others, the following: an SO team's ability to identify the full set of critical partners; the size and nature of a mission's program in a given sector, in turn creating incentives or disincentives for the participation of certain partners; the interest of partners in, or their approach to, program collaboration and coordination; and the benefits to their own programs that partners believe result from involvement on a USAID SO team.

It may be unrealistic to expect that all potential partners in all programs in every USAID country will participate actively, if at all, on SO teams. However, the development of a full range of tools to assist in identifying partners and to create incentives for their active involvement has the potential to substantially increase the number of partners participating on SO teams, as well as the benefits such involvement implies.

III. CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

If our observations during the past eight months are any indication, implementing Reengineering is not an easy task for USAID missions. While change in any bureaucracy does not come easily, putting Reengineering into practice appears to be especially difficult, for several reasons. First, the changes being called for under Reengineering are significant and, in some cases, radical departures from traditional mission practice. This is particularly the case with teamwork and customer and partner participation. The Agency has a long tradition of using committees and task forces to carry out limited, short-term tasks; but teamwork now means the use of relatively long-term cross-functional teams with shared authority, decision-making and accountability for planning, managing and evaluating development programs. The Agency also has a tradition of considering beneficiaries' needs and cultural contexts, consulting with host country governments, and attending to what other donors are doing when designing and implementing programs. Now, customer and partner participation under Reengineering means actually incorporating non-mission people as directly as possible into the process of developing, implementing, and evaluating program strategies. In effect, both teamwork and participation under Reengineering mean no less than fundamentally redefining how USAID staff relate to each other and to groups outside the mission.

Another reason that Reengineering is difficult for the missions at this time is the fact that it is still an imperfect "work in progress." As is to be expected in an organizational change of the magnitude undertaken through Reengineering, there are many details yet to be filled in and apparent contradictions yet to be resolved. Although the clearing away of bureaucratic underbrush and the infusion of flexibility into how missions do business is, in principle, a very welcome development, Reengineering is also requiring missions to use scarce energy to define new processes and procedures as they carry out their basic operations. Furthermore, as more details are being filled in and Reengineering concepts are being put into concrete practice, missions are finding it very difficult to reconcile worthwhile but competing principles, such as flexible implementation versus performance-based contracting, or mission and SO team accountability for achieving strategic objectives that rely partly on non-USAID-generated intermediate results.

Finally, Reengineering is not easy because it has become a "lightning rod" for almost everything that is happening in the Agency, both bad and good. People's fears about budget and program cuts, reductions in force, etc. tend to carry over to what is happening with Reengineering. Similarly, if staff have hopes for a better Agency future, those hopes tend to be pinned to the Reengineering banner. It is difficult enough to implement Reengineering; but that difficulty is compounded by having to do so when emotions are running high and events are very closely connected to its prospects.

Despite both the inherent difficulty of implementing Reengineering and all the usual and unusual constraints during this very difficult period in USAID history, our observations indicate that most missions are making a good-faith effort to implement Reengineering, and many are making

significant progress. A number of missions have realized marked benefits from the new emphasis on teamwork and participation. These benefits indicate that while working in teams and with partners and customers may not be as efficient (particularly with respect to time) as the Agency's traditional management approach, it has the potential to be more effective with respect to achieving valued development results. In addition, it may also lead to results which are more sustainable.

While it appears that missions are making progress in the difficult task of implementing teamwork and participation as envisioned under Reengineering, the challenges and issues identified in this paper still remain for most missions. Although missions will simply have to continue to experiment and "push the envelope" on many of these challenges and issues, there are some things that AID/W can do to help them make surer and swifter progress. Most importantly, AID/W, especially the Agency's senior managers, can help most by providing vigorous, but flexible and non-doctrinal, leadership in implementing Reengineering. This kind of leadership entails clearly communicating the Agency's Reengineering vision and expectations to missions and other operating units and offices. These expectations should not come in the form of more directives. Instead, they should find expression in clear indications of the latitude for experimentation that missions and other operating units are being given, and active communications about the positive things being done and results being achieved in missions on Reengineering's cutting edge.

Over the past eight months, we have observed a tendency on the part of some missions, SO teams, and individual USAID managers and staff to risk erring on the side of caution as they work their way through the new "rules of the game" under Reengineering. This reaction is understandable to the extent that those rules are ambiguous and the consequences of misinterpreting them are uncertain. To the extent that the Agency can clarify what is allowable and what kinds of failures will be tolerated--or, better, acknowledged and accepted as learning experiences--Reengineering will be implemented all the more quickly and effectively.

We offer the following specific suggestions for how AID/W and the Agency's senior managers can help the missions make Reengineering a reality:

- **We believe it would be helpful if AID/W, especially the Agency's senior managers, were to communicate clearly their expectations for working in teams and for working with customers and partners.** For example, what should teamwork look like as we move beyond planning and into the stage of achieving results under Reengineering? How should virtual teamwork be working--from both AID/Washington's point of view and that of the field; and how can that vision be accomplished given such serious constraints as very limited travel and other operating expense funds?

This is not to say that AID/W should get more into the business of directing specifically how Reengineering is to be implemented. It does suggest that the missions are looking for more clarification of AID/W's vision of Reengineering and how it will look when it is fully

implemented, but a vision that is tempered by flexibility and latitude in how the missions get from here to there.

- **AID/W can help by providing badly needed clarification on some points of tradeoff or conflict among key changes occurring as a result of Reengineering.** For example, how does the Agency resolve the seemingly interminable debate between its program and procurement staffs over the opportunities and limits of actively engaging potential contractors and grantees as partners in the strategic planning process? What clarification or guidance can be developed with respect to the question of missions' accountability for strategic objectives when missions are expected to include non-USAID partners and customers in defining and achieving those objectives? How do we resolve the authority, personnel, and accountability issues that have arisen from Reengineering's having overlaid a strategic objective team structure on the traditional mission structure of technical and program offices? What, specifically, is the Agency doing and does it intend to do to adjust the organizational and personnel reward structures so that they reinforce teamwork and participation of customers and partners? In general, missions need more direct guidance on what they are allowed and encouraged to do in their experimenting.
- **Missions need more in the way of hard tools and support from AID/W if they are to succeed in implementing Reengineering.** Flexible encouragement, vision, and policy clarification are critical, but missions also need more more training and technical assistance to make Reengineering work. In addition to a continuing need for more technical assistance and training in results management and performance measurement, missions need to build the Reengineering skills of their senior managers and the teamwork and participation skills of their staffs and partners. They need financial resources, e.g., at least a modicum of OE for virtual teamwork and in-country travel to customers and partners. They need an aggressive effort on the part of senior management to disseminate successful practices and solutions to common problems--successful practices both within USAID and from other agencies and the private sector.
- **Missions need tangible evidence that AID/W is as committed to Reengineering itself as it expects from the field.** It needs to know that key AID/W offices--particularly in Global, PPC and M Bureaus--have committed themselves to Reengineering their own administrative processes, to consulting with missions as their customers and partners, to working with other AID/W offices as teammates, to working with the missions as collaborative virtual team members, and so on. More importantly, missions are looking for visible signs of change, not just verbal commitments.
- **Missions need to see that the Agency is not only continuously trying to improve the new processes and policies set in motion under Reengineering but also vigorously protecting Reengineering's principles of flexibility and empowerment from what appears to be a new layering on of guidance and requirements from AID/W.** For example, missions need to know that the Agency is periodically reviewing the new directives for clarity, fairness,

feasibility of implementation, and, above all, contribution to the results being sought under Reengineering. In short, missions need to be assured that Reengineering is indeed a process of continuous improvement, where even faults and failures in policy and directives are acknowledged and fixed, perhaps by joint Washington-field teams specifically convened to review them.

These are recommendations for AID/W that have surfaced from our observations of some missions during the past eight months. We recognize, however, that the way to successful Reengineering is a two-way street. Through the active engagement of both AID/W and the missions in resolving crucial issues of policy and procedure, through both sides' sharing their experience in and knowledge of successful practices throughout the Agency, through each side's modeling creative adaptations to common circumstances for the other to try, through a commitment by AID/W to resist over-regulating and a commitment by the missions to identify and try workable solutions--if both AID/W and the missions can continue to collaborate in these and other ways, we would expect to see the Agency experience increased success with Reengineering in the near future than it has during the past eight inaugural months.

ATTENDEES, JUNE 4, 1996
RECENT FIELD EXPERIENCE IN PLANNING AND MANAGING FOR RESULTS

Harriett Destler, PPC/CDIE/PME
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Peggy Schultz, M/ROR
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Mari Clark, DEVTECH/G/WID
Marcia Bernbaum, PPC/CDIE
Elizabeth Warfield, ANE/SEA
Kathie Keel, AFR/DP
Katherine Balsis, ENI/PCS
Bill Bacchus, M/DAA/QC
Greg R. Baker, ANE/SEA/EA
Graham B. Kerr, PPC/CDIE/PME
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Scott Smith
Kevin Kelly, ENI/DG
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Wayne King, M/ROR
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Cathy Allen Smith, M/AS/OD
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Pat Vondal, PRISM/MSI
Keith Brown, PRISM/MSI
Larry Beyna, PRISM/MSI
Sheryl Stumbras, PRISM/MSI
Judy Light, PRISM/MSI

ATTENDEES, JUNE 7, 1996
RECENT FIELD EXPERIENCE IN PLANNING AND MANAGING FOR RESULTS

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Lori Dobbins, G/PDSP
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Mari Clark, DEVTECH/G/WID
Marcia Bernbaum, PPC/CDIE
Kathie Keel, AFR/DP
Astrid Jimenez, GC
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Yvonne John, M/ROR
Diane LaVoy, PPC/SP
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Catheryn Thorp, PPC/DP
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Keith Brown, PRISM/MSI
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Judy Light, PRISM/MSI